THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, sir.

(b) Two agreements were signed with Uzbekistan on 17th August, 191 during Uzbek President Mr. Karimov's visit to India.

(c) The agreement on economic cooperation provides for appropriate measures by both sides to facilitate and develop on a stable and lasting basis inter-change in the economic, commercial, scientific-technological and other spheres.

The agreement on cultural cooperation provides for maintenance and strengthening of mutual cooperation in the fields of culture, arts education, science, tourism sports and mass media.

Indian aid for Nepal and Bhutan

1308. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the derails of the aids given to Nepal and Bhutan during 1991-92?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): Projected Aid for Nepal and Bhutan till September, 1991 is as under:

Nepal	— 9,81,50,000-00
Bhutan	— 36,17,50,000-00

Relaxation in the conditions for setting up of New Post Offices in Backward/Hill Areas

1309. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any relaxation in the conditions for setting up of new post Offices/Branch Post Offices in backward/hill areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The norms for opening of branch offices in normal rural areas are:—

(i) a minimum population of 3000 in a village or a group of villages.

(ii) a minimum of 3 kms from the nearest existing post office.

and (iii) a minimum of 33/1/3 per cent of the estimated cost of the proposed post office.

In hilly, tribal, desert and inaccessible areas the relaxed norms are as follows:

(ii) The population norm is reduced to 500 for a single village or 1000 for a group of villages.

(ii) expected income is reduced to a minimum of 15 per cent of the estimated cost.

and (iii) the criterion of distance can be relaxed in hilly areas in special circumstances.

In the case of departmental sub post office to be opened in the hilly, tribal and backward areas. the permissible limit of loss has been raised to Rs. 4800 per annum as against Rs. 2400 per annum in normal rural areas.

(c) Does not arise.

House Tax on the group Housing Societies Flats in Delhi

1310. DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria to calculate house tax on the flats built by Group Housing Societies in Delhi;

(b) whether Government have conducted any survey for the purpose,